

Supply—Transport

appeared in the same paper, issue of April 28, to indicate the uncertainty surrounding this project. As I say, it is supposed to have been under study for the last several years. Here is the news item which appeared in the St. John's *Telegram* on April 25 under the heading: "East Coast Ferry Definite":

The executive manager of the Newfoundland board of trade said Sunday the federal government has definitely decided to provide an east coast ferry service with the mainland for Newfoundland.

The executive manager said transport minister Balcer had assured him during a recent Ottawa visit that a new ferry would be built to operate from some port on the Newfoundland east coast.

A little later on the report says:

Mr. Balcer had announced several months ago that a government committee was studying the possibility of providing Newfoundland with such a ferry service.

Mr. Winch: May I ask if there is anything in the estimates of the department for this project at the present time?

Mr. McGrath: No; not to my knowledge, at any rate. Then, on April 28, 1961, there appeared in the same paper an article entitled "Ferry, yes? Ferry, no?". It says:

Transport minister Balcer said Thursday the question of a ferry service linking the east coast of Newfoundland with the mainland "still is under study".

He declined to confirm or deny a report from St. John's that said he has assured a board of trade official the service would be established.

I will continue the quotation:

Anthony Ayre, executive manager of the Newfoundland board of trade, was reported to have said in a radio interview recently that Mr. Balcer had told him there would definitely be such a ferry service.

Mr. Chairman, I shall not present any further arguments either pro or con in respect of this proposed service, but I should like to inform the minister that the municipal council of the city of St. John's, as well as labour and service organizations of Newfoundland, would be very grateful to the minister for some indication as to government policy in this regard. If it is intended by the government to provide such a service then, of course, the question in everyone's mind is, how long will the study take? I am sure all my constituents, as well as hon. members of this committee, are anxious to know what the results of the study will be, and whether or not the government will decide to provide this ferry service. From indications to this date, it is my understanding that the government will provide this service, but there has been no definite statement made in the last few years.

Mr. Chairman, I should also like to bring to the attention of the minister, at this time,

[Mr. Deschatelets.]

as I did last year in this committee the situation regarding the ever growing marine services division of the Department of Transport. I should like to refer particularly to the inequities which exist between the rates of pay to personnel manning ships in the Newfoundland agency, the maritimes agency, the Quebec agency and the British Columbia agency. I understand these rates of pay are determined by the Department of Labour, on the basis of prevailing rates for similar types of jobs in these areas. The situation is, however, anomalous in that seamen and officers working on Department of Transport ships operated by the Canadian National Railways receive the same rates of pay as their counterparts in other parts of Canada.

On the other hand, seamen working on ships operated by the marine services division receive varying rates of pay depending upon the area in which they work. As an example of this situation, seamen working in Newfoundland on Department of Transport ships receive \$185 per month, although I understand this has now been raised to \$200 per month. Their counterparts, working on similar ships, performing similar duties in the maritime provinces, receive \$229 per month, plus a \$5 per month stevedore allowance. I am not sure of the prevailing rates of pay in the Quebec agency, but it is my understanding that they are higher yet. I suggest this inequitable situation should be corrected. I feel a Canadian seaman working on a Department of Transport ship operating off the coast of Newfoundland should receive the same rate of pay as that which applies to a Canadian seaman working on a Department of Transport ship under the maritime agency, the Quebec agency, or the province of British Columbia agency. These ships are all operated by the federal government of Canada, and the same rates of pay should apply throughout the country. I am sure the hon. members of this committee would be interested in hearing the minister's comments in this regard.

I should like to compliment the minister and his department for the excellent work which has been carried out during the past winter and spring in an attempt to cope with the extraordinary ice conditions which prevailed along the coasts of the Atlantic provinces. The ice conditions existing off the coast of Newfoundland were worse this past season than they have been during the last 10 years. The provision of the two new icebreakers—the *Sir Humphrey Gilbert* and the *Wolfe*—has been of great help at a very opportune time. I should hate to think what the consequences might have been during this past winter season were it not for the provision of these two additional icebreakers.